

Disclaimer

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Fact Sheet for Applicants from Abroad

We are very pleased that you are interested in studying at the ZHAW.

This fact sheet is designed to help you prepare for your studies at the ZHAW. It contains information on:

- **Residing in Switzerland for study purposes**
- **Tuition fees**
- **Admission** with a foreign qualification
(this also applies to Swiss nationals)

For further information, please contact the academic office of the degree programme you intend to apply for. This link gives you an overview of the contact options:

<https://www.zhaw.ch/de/studium/kontakte/>

1 Residing in Switzerland for study purposes

Applicants from abroad who wish to study in Switzerland must apply for a **residence permit** and take out **health insurance** before they begin their studies. This is their personal responsibility.

1.1 Residence permit

1.1.1 Student residence permit for Swiss or EU nationals

You have lived abroad, are a Swiss national or a national of an EU member state and you are coming to Switzerland to study.

If you are a Swiss national, you can study in Switzerland as a matter of course. However, the information below on health insurance and on your acceptance and admission with a foreign qualification also applies to you.

If you are an EU national, please find out whether your country is a signatory to the agreement between the Swiss Confederation, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other, on the free movement of persons "[Abkommen zwischen der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft einerseits und der Europäischen Gemeinschaft und ihren Mitgliedstaaten andererseits über die Freizügigkeit](#)" (only in German, see "[Free Movement of Persons Switzerland –](#)



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[EU/EFTA](#)"). In accordance with Art. 24, residence permits for students are issued on a yearly basis for the period of their studies. In order to ensure that you receive a residence permit, you must be able to present evidence that you have taken out health insurance and that you have the necessary financial means to cover the expenses of your stay and studies in Switzerland.

Please contact the Migration Office of Canton Zurich to find out what formalities you need to complete in order for a residence permit to be issued:

Migrationsamt des Kantons Zürich, Berninastrasse 45, 8057 Zürich, Tel. +41 43 259 88 00,
[Migrationsamt Kanton Zürich](#).

1.1.2 Student residence permit for nationals of other countries

If you are a national of a country which is not a signatory to the above-mentioned agreement, contact the Migration Office of Canton Zurich to find out what formalities you need to complete in order for a residence permit to be issued:

Migrationsamt des Kantons Zürich, Berninastrasse 45, 8057 Zürich, Tel. +1 43 259 88 00,
[Migrationsamt Kanton Zürich](#).

Please note in particular the regulations in the ordinance on admission, residence and gainful employment (OASA) (Verordnung über Zulassung, Aufenthalt und Erwerbstätigkeit (VZAE), only in German) of 24 October 2007 in Art. 23 concerning the conditions for study and continuing education purposes ([Art. 23, Persönliche Voraussetzungen](#)) and Art. 16 concerning registration and de-registration for residence during the working week ([Art. 16, An- und Abmeldung bei einem Wochenaufenthalt](#)).

With regard to part-time employment or internships during your studies, please note the following OASA/VZAE regulations: [Art. 38, Aus- und Weiterbildung mit Nebenerwerb](#), [Art. 39, Ausbildung mit obligatorischem Praktikum](#) and [Art. 40, Erwerbstätigkeit während der Weiterbildung an einer Hochschule oder Fachhochschule](#).

1.2 Health insurance

If you are studying in Switzerland with a student residence permit, you are obliged to take out health insurance according to Art. 3 of the federal law on health insurance (Bundesgesetz über die Krankenversicherung (only in German), [Art. 3, KVG](#)).

It is your personal responsibility to organise your own health insurance.

If you can demonstrate that you have sufficient health insurance cover from a foreign health insurance provider, you can apply to the residents' registration office for exemption from the Swiss compulsory health insurance requirement.

1.3 Swiss social security number

The ZHAW has to report the social security number for all students to the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) by 15 October each year. In the case of foreign students who do not have a Swiss social security number, the ZHAW has to apply to the Central Compensation Office CCO (Zentrale Ausgleichsstelle ZAS) for a number to be issued. This number will be stated on the enrolment confirmations from the second semester onward.



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2 Tuition fees

Administrative costs are covered by the fees charged in connection with the admission process. These fees are set by the ordinance governing tuition fees at Zurich Universities of Applied Sciences ([Verordnung über die Studiengebühren an der Zürcher Fachhochschule](#), only in German).

When you come to Switzerland to study, you have the right to live in the country but, according to Swiss law, you do not have a legal place of residence here (Art. 23 of the Swiss Civil Code (Zivilgesetzbuch ZGB)). If this is the case, you must pay a supplementary fee of CHF 500.00 per semester in addition to the standard fee of CHF 720.00 per semester (see the above-mentioned ordinance governing tuition fees at Zurich Universities of Applied Sciences ([Verordnung über die Studiengebühren an der Zürcher Fachhochschule](#))). This additional tuition fee appears on your semester invoice. This fee does not apply if you hold Swiss citizenship.

3 Application process: admission with a foreign qualification

3.1 Admission to a Bachelor's programme

Applicants who have completed their school education either wholly or partially abroad or in accordance with a foreign education law must submit the following documents in addition to their application form in order for their admission to a Bachelor's programme at the ZHAW to be evaluated:

- Qualification or academic certificate which, in the country of issue, entitles the holder to be admitted to university; this document must include details of the subjects studied and grades awarded;
- A notarised German translation (in exceptional cases English is also acceptable) of the qualification or academic certificate entitling the holder to be admitted to university;
- If the applicant has already started or completed a university degree, transcripts of records or the degree certificate, together with a notarised translation;
- Confirmation (reference) from an employer that the applicant has acquired at least one year's professional practice in a field closely related to the degree programme he or she intends to study¹;
- Copies of recognised diplomas of German language proficiency (Goethe-Zertifikat C1, Zentrale Mittelstufenprüfung or equivalent) (please see the regulations on matriculation and exmatriculation ([Reglement zur Zulassung, Immatrikulation und Exmatrikulation](#), only in German));
- CV with details of education and employment history

¹ Before you begin your studies, you must have acquired at least one year's practical experience of professional working life or completed an apprenticeship in an area related to the field of study you intend to pursue (please see below for exceptions to this ruling). As a rule, this requirement is at least partially met if you hold a vocational qualification at secondary education level (in Switzerland, a Federal Vocational Baccalaureate or Specialised Baccalaureate) related to the degree programme you have chosen. Exceptions can be made in the field of health professions and for the degree programmes in Computer Science, Natural Sciences and Engineering, in which students can at least partially complete the required one year's practical experience during or after the programme. For the degree programme in Applied Languages, linguistic competence instead of practical experience is a prerequisite.

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3.1.1 Evaluation of foreign qualifications

Foreign qualifications are evaluated according to assessment criteria established by ENIC/swissuniversities:

- [List of countries](#) with admission requirements for foreign qualifications according to country
- [Baccalauréat International or International Baccalaureate \(IB\)](#)
- [European Baccalaureate](#)

The official equivalency verification process is carried out by the ZHAW after your application has been submitted. A flow chart allowing you to assess your chances of being admitted to the ZHAW is available on our [website](#) under “Studying for a bachelor’s degree with a foreign qualification”.

Immediately below, you will find a detailed description of the criteria and steps involved in evaluating foreign qualifications.

1. *Does the qualification allow the applicant access to higher education?*

In order for the qualification to be recognised by the ZHAW as allowing access to higher education, it must meet one of the following requirements (a or b):

- a. The qualification submitted by the applicant appears in the swissuniversities list of countries as an international certificate which basically entitles the holder to study at university level. The ZHAW has created a supplementary list of certificates which, although they do not appear in the swissuniversities list of countries, are frequently submitted and specifically relate to vocational education (e.g. German Fachabitur).
- b. The applicant submits a document testifying that the certificate they have presented is generally regarded by recognised universities in his/her country of origin as allowing access to higher education. The document provides details of the regulation on the basis of which the certificate is recognised.

The term “generally” means that the certificate presented is, as a rule, treated as equivalent to the qualification named in the list of countries: It is recognised as allowing admission to university studies and/or meets the educational requirement for admission subject to further conditions, such as a certain grade point average or entrance examination.

The ZHAW verifies whether the document submitted provides sufficient evidence that the qualification can be recognised as allowing the holder access to higher education and therefore whether his/her application can be considered further.

If neither of these criteria (a or b) is met, the qualification the applicant has presented is not regarded as allowing him or her access to higher education and cannot be recognised as equivalent. In order to be admitted to a degree programme, the applicant must complete the Swiss baccalaureate (Matura) or sit a comprehensive entrance examination. For further information, please contact the academic office responsible for the degree programme you have chosen.

Further verification of an application is carried out only if the qualification is regarded as allowing the holder access to higher education.

2. *Does the qualification allowing the applicant access to higher education cover the subjects studied for a Swiss Baccalaureate?*

In order for a qualification to be recognised by the ZHAW as allowing the holder to access higher education, it must cover the following subjects:

- a. 1. First language (native language)
- b. 2. Second language
- c. 3. Mathematics
- d. 4. Natural sciences (biology, chemistry or physics)
- e. 5. Humanities and social sciences (geography, history or economics/law)
- f. 6. Elective (one subject from category 2, 4 or 5)

Please note that the additional swissuniversities requirement that these subjects must have been studied “during the last 3 years” is not mandatory for applications to the ZHAW. However, the required subjects must each appear in at least one place in the certificates submitted.

If these subjects are not covered, the qualification does not meet the conditions to be recognised as equivalent to the Swiss Matura.

In order to be admitted to a degree programme, the applicant must complete the Swiss baccalaureate (Matura) or sit a comprehensive entrance examination. For further information, please contact the academic office responsible for the degree programme you have chosen.

3. *Under what conditions is the qualification allowing access to higher education considered equivalent to a Swiss Matura? (Note: Since the ZHAW does not impose any additional admission requirements (grade point average, certificate of university admission) for applicants from Germany, these candidates can skip Step 3. The equivalency verification process for admission is therefore concluded at the end of Step 2.)*

The ZHAW verifies whether the qualification meets the specific requirements to be recognised as equivalent. These requirements are explained in the assessment criteria established by ENIC/swissuniversities under [Countries](#), [European Baccalaureate](#) or [International Baccalaureate \(IB\)](#).

In evaluating an application, the ZHAW follows the criteria established by the University of Zurich. The conditions may be cumulative (“and”) or alternative (“or”). Examples of such conditions are as follows:

- a. Minimum grade/point average, e.g. for IB: a minimum of 32 out of 42 points (not counting bonus points)
- b. Minimum grades in certain subjects, e.g. for USA: 5 Advanced Placement Tests, each one with a minimum score of 3 and including 2 languages, mathematics/calculus, one natural sciences subject and one social sciences subject
- c. Certificate of university admission in the desired academic subject provided by a recognised university in the country where the qualification was issued
- d. 2 years of university-level studies recognised by the respective university
- e. Complementary examination of the Swiss universities ECUS

For the ZHAW, this takes the form of an entrance examination (general education).

The specific admission requirements from c to e are applied to qualifications which, in accordance with the evidence presented, are recognised by the ZHAW as allowing access to higher education (see 1.b above).

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Rektorat

Ressort Internationales
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Applicants who fulfil these requirements are admitted. Applicants who do not fulfil all the requirements may be admitted after taking an entrance examination subject to the following conditions: the ECUS complementary examination as listed under 'e' above is not a mandatory requirement. The ECUS complementary examination is not considered mandatory if it is not specified as such or if it is only listed as an alternative requirement. Prospective applicants who do not fulfil the admission requirements in accordance with 1 and 2 above are advised to complete their education and to pass the Swiss maturity examination, or to sit a comprehensive entrance examination. For further information, please contact the academic office responsible for the degree programme you have chosen.

3.2 Admission to a Master's programme

If you want to apply for a Master's programme, please consult the admission and application requirements for the programme in question on our [website](#) (only in German).

3.3 German language proficiency C1

The ZHAW offers German courses to allow you to prepare for the Goethe-Zertifikat C1. For further information, please go to: www.daf.zhaw.ch.

3.4 Submission of application documents

Applicants are responsible for providing the necessary evidence to ensure that they fulfil the admission requirements that specifically apply to them. Please note that, under certain circumstances, you will not be able to enrol if you do not submit your documents by the deadline.

Erlassverantwortliche/-r	Leiter/-in Stab Ressort Internationales Leiter/-in Stab Ressort Lehre	Ablageort	6.01.03 Mobilität
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